

A MISSION BEGINS



Americans have always been willing to go to great lengths to preserve their freedom and way of life. Clarksville Base is a tangible record of how Americans protected themselves during the Cold War.

The Cold War developed after World War II, when the wartime alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union crumbled. For more than forty years, the two nations were locked in a political, economic, and indirect military struggle. The conflict was called the Cold War because the armies of the United States and the Soviet Union never directly fought each other.

Although the United States and the Soviet Union never declared war on one another, they did engage in a nuclear arms race. Each nation created stockpiles of nuclear weapons and built facilities like Clarksville Base where they could be stored in a secure environment.



A perimeter bridge



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Welcomes visitors and gives a map of the self-guided tour

COMMUNITY LIFE PANEL

The role of the administration complex

MARINE BARRACKS PANEL

Marine duties and life on Clarksville Base

CHANNELIZATION PANEL

Re-routing water

STORAGE IGLOO PANEL

Features of the igloo storage buildings

COMBINED A-B-C PANEL

Features and functions of this building

RAILHEAD PANEL

Weapon transportation by rail, railhead, and nuclear couriers

GERMAN POW PANEL

The story of Fort Campbell's German POWs

PERIMETER BRIDGE PANEL

Features and functions of the bridge

GRAVEL GERTIE PANEL

Unique design, features, and function

THE "VOICE" PANEL

How the nickname came to be, and the mystery nearby

ABOVE GROUND A PANEL

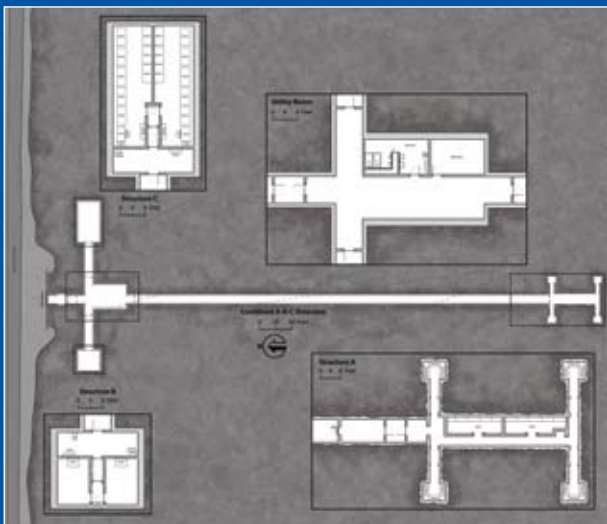
Unique nature of the building, pillboxes

PEOPLE WITH A MISSION

Like America's other nuclear weapons storage sites, Clarksville Base had a specific mission: to keep the nation's nuclear weapons secure and ready for use. Everyone who served at the base performed a function that supported this central mission. Administrators managed the operations of the base, weapons handlers transported the weapons and performed routine maintenance, inspectors examined the weapons to make sure they would work when they were needed, and security personnel kept the weapons safe. It is a testament to the professionalism of the people who served at Clarksville Base that the facility never experienced an enemy security breach or a nuclear accident during its 17 years in operation.



A convoy



Combined A-B-C structure

BUILDINGS WITH A MISSION

Security was the top priority at Clarksville Base. Both the physical layout of the base and design of the buildings helped keep the weapons stockpiles secure. Three main layers of security were used to protect the weapons. First, the base was built within Fort Campbell so the Army could provide a security buffer from the outside world.

The second layer of security was a system of perimeter fences and a patrol road that surrounded the entire base. Heavily armed Marines circled the patrol road at regular intervals to make sure that the base was secure.

The reinforced concrete storage bunkers within Clarksville Base provided the third layer of security. Armed Marines in "pillboxes" (small concrete guardhouses) watched the entrances, which were secured with heavy blast doors. Inside, multiple cage doors and bank vault doors secured the weapons storage areas.

These security measures may seem extreme, but during the Cold War, Americans believed that nuclear weapons were critical for the protection of their freedom and way of life.



A pillbox

WELCOME TO CLARKSVILLE BASE

